



**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS  
BEAUMONT DIVISION**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

**VS.**

**WARREN DONELL SHEPEARD**

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§

**CASE NO. 1:11-CR-76**

**FINDINGS OF FACT AND RECOMMENDATION ON PLEA OF TRUE  
BEFORE THE UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE**

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 636(b) and the Local Rules for the District Court, Eastern District of Texas, the District Court referred this matter for hearing and the submission of findings of fact and a report and recommendation pursuant to 18 U.S.C. §§ 3401(i) and 3583(e). The United States alleges that the defendant, Warren Donell Sheppard, violated conditions of supervised release imposed by United States District Judge Ron Clark. The United States Probation Office filed its *Petition for Warrant or Summons for Offender Under Supervision* (doc. #51) requesting the revocation of the defendant's supervised release. The Court conducted a hearing on February 2, 2017, in accordance with Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure 11, 32 and 32.1. The defendant was present and represented by counsel at the hearing. Having heard the evidence, this court factually

finds that the defendant has violated conditions of supervision and recommends that such violation warrants the revocation of his supervised release.

After conducting the proceeding in the form and manner prescribed by Federal Rule of Criminal Procedure 11, the Court finds:

a. That the defendant, after consultation with counsel of record, has knowingly, freely and voluntarily consented to the administration of the plea of true in this cause by a United States Magistrate Judge subject to a final approval and imposition of sentence by the District Court.

b. That the defendant is fully competent and capable of entering an informed plea, that the defendant is aware of the nature of the charges and the consequences of the plea, that his plea of true is a knowing and voluntary plea, not the result of force or threats, and that the plea is supported by an independent evidentiary basis in fact establishing each of the essential elements of the conduct.

### **STATEMENT OF REASONS**

#### **A. Procedural History**

On February 8, 2012, The Honorable Ron Clark, Chief District Judge of the Eastern District of Texas sentenced defendant after he pled guilty to the offense of felon in possession, a Class C felony. The Court sentenced the defendant to 60 months followed by three (3) years of supervised release subject to the standard conditions of release, plus special conditions to include financial disclosure, child support requirement, any financial penalty imposed by the judgment, no new credit without approval, gambling restriction, and a \$100 special assessment. On September 9, 2015, Sheppard completed his period of imprisonment and began service of the supervision term.

On August 11, 2016, the Court modified Mr. Sheppard's term of supervision to include the

defendant shall reside in and participate in the community corrections component of a Community Corrections Center, as instructed, until successfully discharged by the center director, but no longer than 180 days from admission.

**B. Allegations in Petition**

The United States Probation Office alleges that the defendant violated the following special condition of supervised release:

*The defendant shall reside in and participate in the community corrections component of a Community Corrections Center, as instructed, until successfully discharged by the center direction, but no longer than 180 days from admission. You shall abide by all rules and regulations of the center, which includes paying subsistence, establishing a saving account and regularly contribute no less than 25 percent of employment earning to the account in order to accumulate funds for the improvement upon his life style upon his release.*

Specifically, on December 16, 2016, Warren Donell Sheppard was unsuccessfully terminated from Leidel Residential Reentry due to him submitting a urine specimen which tested positive for opiates, codeine and morphine.

**C. Evidence presented at Hearing:**

At the hearing, the Government offered the following evidence as its factual basis for the allegations set out *supra*. The Government submitted, in exhibit form, a memorandum from the director of the Leidel Residential Re-entry Center stating that on December 4, 2016, Warren Donell Sheppard submitted to a urinalysis. The toxicology report for that urinalysis specimen yielded a positive result for opiates, codeine and morphine.

Defendant, Warren Donell Sheppard, offered a plea of true to the allegations. Specifically,

he agreed with the evidence summarized above and pled true to the allegation that he was terminated from the residential reentry center in violation of his supervision conditions.

#### **D. Sentencing Guidelines; Findings and Recommended Disposition**

The allegations, supporting evidence and plea of true warrant revocation of supervised release. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3583(e)(3). The Court factually finds by a preponderance of the evidence that the defendant violated a special condition of his supervised release by being unsuccessfully discharged from the community corrections component of a residential reentry center. This conduct constitutes a Grade C violation under U.S.S.G. § 7B1.3(a)(1). Upon finding a Grade C violation, the Court may revoke the defendant's supervised release. *See* U.S.S.G. § 7B1.3(a)(2).

Based upon the Defendant's criminal history category of V and the Grade C violation, the sentencing guidelines suggest a sentence of imprisonment for a period ranging from 7 to 13 months. *See* U.S.S.G. § 7B1.4(a). Because the original offense of conviction was a Class C felony, the statutory maximum imprisonment term upon revocation is two years. *See* 18 U.S.C. § 3583(e)(3).

According to U.S.S.G. § 7B1.3(d), any restitution, fine, community confinement, home detention, or intermittent confinement previously imposed in connection with a sentence for which revocation is ordered that remains unpaid or unserved at the time of revocation shall be ordered to be paid or served in addition to the sanction determined under U.S.S.G. § 7B1.4, and any such unserved period of community confinement, home detention, or intermittent confinement may be converted to an equivalent period of imprisonment. In this case, according to the records submitted by the Probation Office, Mr. Sheppard failed to serve 60 days of court-ordered time in the residential reentry center.

The Fifth Circuit states that Chapter 7 of the Sentencing Guidelines regarding the revocation

of supervised release is advisory only. *See United States v. Cade*, 279 F.3d 265, 271 n.2 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2002) (citing *United States v. Montez*, 952 F.2d 854, 859 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1992); *United States v. Headrick*, 963 F.2d 777, 782 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1992)). Because Chapter 7 was promulgated as an advisory policy statement and there are no applicable guidelines for sentencing after revocation of supervised release<sup>1</sup>, the Court may impose a greater or lesser sentence upon revocation. *United States v. Gonzalez*, 250 F.3d 923, 925 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2001). Further, a sentence imposed for revocation will be upheld unless it is in violation of the law or plainly unreasonable. *Id.* *See also United States v. Pena*, 125 F.3d 285, 288 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1997) (citations omitted).

Here, the evidence and the defendant's own admission supports a finding that the defendant violated his supervision conditions. Mr. Sheppard pled true, agreed with the Court's recommended sentence for that violation, and waived his right to allocute before the District Court.

Accordingly, based upon the defendant's plea of true, the agreement of the parties, and the evidence presented in this case, it is the recommendation of the undersigned United States Magistrate Judge that the District Court accept the plea of true and revoke Defendant's supervised release. The undersigned magistrate judge recommends that the District Court order Defendant to serve a term of **nine (9) months** imprisonment, which includes the 60 days of unserved residential reentry center time. No additional term of supervision should be imposed.

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<sup>1</sup> *See U.S. Sentencing Guidelines Manual*, Ch. 7, pt. A, cmt. 1 ("At this time, the Commission has chosen to promulgate policy statements only.")

### **OBJECTIONS**

Objections must be: (1) specific, (2) in writing, and (3) served and filed within fourteen (14) days after being served with a copy of this report. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 636(b)(1). A party's failure to object bars that party from: (1) entitlement to *de novo* review by a district judge of proposed findings and recommendations, *see Rodriguez v. Bowen*, 857 F.2d 275, 276-77 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1988), and (2) appellate review, except on grounds of plain error of unobjected-to factual findings and legal conclusions accepted by the district court, *see Douglass v. United Servs. Auto. Ass'n.*, 79 F.3d 1415, 1417 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1996) (en banc). The constitutional safeguards afforded by Congress and the courts require that, when a party takes advantage of his right to object to a magistrate's findings or recommendation, a district judge must exercise its nondelegable authority by considering the actual evidence and not merely by reviewing and blindly adopting the magistrate judge's report and recommendation. *See Hernandez v. Estelle*, 711 F.2d 619, 620 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1983); *United States v. Elsoffer*, 644 F.2d 357, 359 (5<sup>th</sup> Cir. 1981) (per curiam).

**SIGNED this the 3rd day of February, 2017.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Keith F. Giblin", written over a horizontal line.

KEITH F. GIBLIN  
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE